



Reviewing IPA studies: Developing and evaluating a new tool

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Aim of this presentation

- To describe the development of an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) quality criteria tool to distinguish between review articles in a qualitative Systematic Review and which may have wider use.
- To propagate discussion

Background

- A systematic review of the contribution of IPA to cancer including cancer related EOL research with patients and/or carers (PROSPERO:CRD42016049765)
- To distinguish between review studies in terms of overall contribution by developing and formally testing an IPA quality criteria tool drawing on Smith's (2011) evaluative criteria
- **A main aim to review claims of application to clinical practice**



Why a SR of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) and cancer /EOL

- Why do an IPA/Cancer review rather than investigate any other qualitative contribution to cancer and EOL research?

The complexity of cancer experiences and the crucial meaning of a diagnosis of cancer for an individual, IPA, with its close up, ideographic commitment is well suited to investigating personal lived experience of cancer sufferers.



A reminder... What is IPA

- Detailed examination of personal lived experience/sense making/of existential import

Draws on

- Phenomenology
- Hermeneutics
- Ideography

Existential Crisis?

Always.





Quality Criteria Project Background

- Jonathan Smith (1996) wrote his position paper on IPA
- In 2011 Smith evaluated the contribution of IPA studies across topics/countries
- Articulated that: IPA was to be judged on its own terms/rejected check list approach
- Developed IPA evaluative criteria drawing on generic qualitative criteria (Yardley,2000)

Rationale for developing IPA quality criteria tool

Lots of qualitative
evaluative criteria

but

none engaging with IPA

Sensitive to IPA





What we have done...so far

- Phase 1: (i)Scrutiny of Smith's (2011) quality criteria, a literature review, consultation between 5 experienced/ novice IPA researchers (review team) leading to IPAEVal.V1.
- Phase 2: Face Validity: (i) IPAEval V1 used independently by 5 researchers with five randomly selected IPA articles and recorded the difficulties (ii) Clarity of terms task. Leading to IPAEVal.V2.
- Phase 3: Inter- rater reliability testing with seven qualitative researchers



Results: Phase 1

- Phase 1:
- 14 item IPAEEVal.V1 tool drawing on Smith's 2011 work (incl. two added questions about application to clinical practice);
- Responses yes/no/comments
- decision – poor quality, acceptable, excellent quality

Examples of questions from phase 1: IPA Eval.V1

- **Does the article subscribe to the theoretical principles of IPA *Phenomenology*** - The author(s) should demonstrate detailed, nuanced examination of the participants' lived experience of a phenomenon
- **Does the article subscribe to the theoretical principles of IPA *Interpretative*** – Is there evidence of in-depth, interpretation of each theme, reference to wider concepts, possible attending to linguistic devices such as metaphors to show how the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants' experience
- **Does the article subscribe to the theoretical principles of IPA *Ideographic***
– Does the article contain a detailed analysis with supporting extracts indicating convergence, divergence of individuals responses

Feedback from phase 2 (IPAEval.V1)

- A lack of opportunity for a more nuanced evaluation. A change from a binary response to a five-point rating scale to identify the hierarchy of the qualitative studies.
- Overlap between two items on clinical application
- The need for accompanying integrated guide which would be useful for novice IPA researchers
- Scoring which would be weighted in favour of the articles containing core elements of IPA
- Example to demonstrate meaning of item 1 (Phenomenology)



Results: Phase 2:

Led to the 13 item IPAEEVal2

5 point Likert scale

Integrated guide:

- **Example:** Does the article subscribe to IPA principles Phenomenology - detailed, nuanced account of how a phenomenon (e.g. illness) appears to the participants

Improved clinical question:

Is there consideration of how findings contribute to clinical practice

IPA Eval2

Question no	Questions	0	1	2	3	4	Any comments e.g Clarity of item term, usefulness
1	<p>Does the article subscribe to IPA principles Phenomenology -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detailed, nuanced account of how a phenomenon (e.g. illness) appears to the participants 						
2	<p>Does the article subscribe to the theoretical principles of IPA Interpretative –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaborate, insightful , interpretation of participants experiences • Each quote relates to the theme • Refers to wider ideas to inform analysis • Notes language used to express views e.g., metaphors • Indicates similarities and differences in responses 						
3	<p>Does the article subscribe to the theoretical principles of IPA Ideographic –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed attention to the individual's unique lived experience with supporting extracts 						
4	Is there a clear focused research question						
5	Is IPA appropriate to address study aims						



Results: Phase 3

- Inter-rater reliability. Replies from six researchers (1 no IPA experience); 2 limited experience; 1 experienced.
- Agreement between reviewers on IPA principles
- Rating problematic but 5/6 rated article as excellent; one as acceptable
- Item 9 problematic with negative feedback; “Do the authors account for data extraction selection

Inter-rater reliability : IPA principles.

N SD D A SA

Question no	Questions	0	1	2	3	4	Comments e.g. clarity of terms, usefulness
1	<p>Does the article subscribe to IPA principles <i>Phenomenology</i> -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> detailed, nuanced account of how a phenomenon (e.g. illness) appears to the participants 				11	111	Median = 4
2	<p><i>Interpretative</i> -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elaborate, insightful , interpretation of participants experiences Each quote relates to the theme Refers to wider ideas to inform analysis Notes language used to express views e.g., metaphors Indicates similarities and differences in responses 			1	111 1	1	Median =3
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the article subscribe to the theoretical principles of IPA ideography (detailed attention to unique experience with supporting extracts) 				111 11	1	Median = 3

Inter - rater reliability agreement

N SD D A SA

Question no	Questions	0	1	2	3	4	Comments
1	Does the article subscribe to IPA principles <i>Phenomenology</i> - detailed, nuanced account of how a phenomenon (e.g. illness) appears to the participants				11	111	Median = 4
2	Does the article subscribe to IPA principles <i>Interpretative</i> – (explanation here)			1	1111	1	Median = 3
3	Does the article subscribe to the theoretical principles of IPA ideography (brief explanation)				1111 1	1	Median = 3
4	Is there a clear focused research question				1	1111 1	Median=4
5	Is IPA appropriate to address study aims				1	1111	Median =4
6	Is the research with a homogenous group (reasonably similar characteristics)				111	1111	Median = 3
13	Is there consideration of how findings contribute to clinical practice	1		11	111	1	Median = 2.5

Discussion: Where are we now?

- 13 item - IPA Eval.V3
- Some items to be reviewed further
- Further testing? A range of backgrounds? But...
- Rating scale? Important for gauging degree of agreement of items but tensions arise when pushing qualitative evaluative criteria into the frame of quantitative research - for what is essentially a subjective and judgemental task
- Consider IPA specific criteria essential for acceptable quality

